

Uncle Myron's Christmas Review

Uncle Myron is center stage, looking at a large scrapbook, with obvious delight, as the lights go up, or as a spotlight directs audience attention to him. The rest of the cast is off stage, but ready to make a quick entrance. He puts the book down, smiles at the audience and speaks.

Myron

Well the Christmas ship has set sail again and, like it or not, we're all on board once again. Unfortunately, Christmas feels like rough water for a lot of people; what with the waves of reality crashing against the hull of expectation, all too many of us end up swabbing the decks of despair with the mop of . . . the mop of what . . . um . . . well, the mop of . . .

Little Stanley

(interrupting, very excited) Uncle Myron, Uncle Myron, is it time yet, huh, Uncle Myron?

Myron

Oh, not yet, Little Stanley—*(chuckling to audience and pointing with thumb)* That's my pal Little Stanley. He's got a really big part later in the show. Now, where was I . . . Oh yes—my name is Myron and I'm glad you're aboard the Good Ship Christmas! I'm your captain for this voyage. We're about ready to set sail—so batten down your hatches. There's some rough water ahead; but don't worry; she's a worthy vessel and we'll make it through. Before we shove off, I just want to tell you a few things about your captain: I love God, I love people—especially children, I love Christmas, and as you may have noticed, I love the sea . . .

The entire rushes on stage for the opening song..

ALL

Our ship is ready and the winds are strong,
It's time to get aboard if you want to come along.
She's a worthy vessel and she needs a crew
That'll steer her straight on a course that's true.
(That'll steer her straight on a course that's true.)

Chorus

All hands on deck for the order of the day,
The captain has a word to say;
He knows his ship and he loves the sea,
So, if you want to sail listen carefully.
(If you want to sail listen carefully.)

Myron

I'm uncle Myron and I'm here
To help you stay on course at this time of year
The Christmas seas can be pretty rough,
So if you want to sail them you've gotta be tough!

Chorus

Myron

Our ship set sail in Bethlehem
From a manger in a stable by a crowded inn;
With a babe who could sail before he could crawl,
A-lookin' for a ship that was wrecked by the fall,
(A-lookin' for a ship that was wrecked by the fall.

Chorus

Myron

Welcome aboard, you're all looking fit;
I'm proud to be your captain as we make this little trip;
Now it's time to man your posts if sailors ye be,
For the good ship Christmas is a-headin' out to sea,
(For the good ship Christmas is a-headin' out to sea!)

Chorus

The song ends, the cast exits, leaving Myron alone on stage.

Myron

I have a little Christmas tradition. Every year I look for a family whose fragile boat of Christmas cheer is foundering upon the sand bar of anxiety. Their sails of assurance are being shredded by the harsh winds of doubt, under a stormy sky of hyperactivity as the lightning bolt of inconvenience strikes the hold of tradition, already bursting, with the cargo of responsibility, which strains against the ropes of . . . of . . . of . . . hmm, the ropes what . . .

Little Stanley

(interrupting again) Time? Time, Uncle Myron?

Myron

Yes! That's *it!* Time!

Little Stanley

Ooooookay! *(He runs out to do his part, Myron stops him.)*

Myron

No . . . no, Little Stanley, not yet—your part comes later in the show!

Stanley

(really disappointed) Oh, alright . . . *(droops shoulders, walks back.)*

Myron

Folks, Little Stanley's has a really big part in the show—but it comes later. Now, back to my Christmas tradition. As I said, each year I find a family having trouble with Christmas and I try to help them out. This year I found the Nicholsons—they're great folks, really, and . . . oh, here they come now—well, you'll see . . . *(Myron exits).*

Annie

I knew it! We're late again! We're always late!

Jenny

(irritated) Oh *great*, now we have to sit in front!

Mitchell

(thrilled and loud) Oh boy! We get to sit in front! I love sitting in front! Dad, don't you like to sit in front? I sure do! I like to sit in the front . . . the front is *awesome!*

Jenny

Shhhhhhhhh! Do you always have to be so loud and happy?
It's so embarrassing!

Annie

Come on kids, we're in church. Be quiet!

They arrive, center stage, facing audience on four stools)

Alex

Okay, here's a spot. Slide in everyone.

Mitchell

(still excited) Look mom, the Wilson's are here! And there's Nick! *(stands on his chair and waves)* Nick! Nick! Hey, Nick!

Annie

Mitchell! Sit down and be quiet!

Mitchell

(sitting down) Mom, why do we have to be quiet in church? Does God like things to be quiet? Why does God want things quiet, why, mom?

Jenny

It's no use mom. He's totally hopeless. . .

Voice

(from off stage) Now turn with me in your hymnals, to page three hundred forty-four *(the short Christmas hymn from the sound track is to be played in background—it begins immediately.)*

All but Mitchell umble through the hymnal, looking for the page. Mitchell has found the page and is singing with great enthusiasm.

Alex

Was that four forty-three?

Annie

No, I think it was three-something. *(to Jenny)* Honey, did you hear the number?

Jenny

(fumbling through a Bible) There aren't any songs in this book.

Annie

That's because you're looking in the Bible, honey.

Alex

Ask Mitchell—looks like he found it.

Jenny

Mitchell! Mitchell! What's the page number? *Mitchell!* (*she keeps poking him, trying to get his attention, he turns to her just as the song ends. . .*)

Mitchell

(*looks at sister*) Aaaaaamen—Three hundred forty-four (*skit ends—either cut lights or have family exit with their chairs, Myron enters*).

Myron

I realize they seem pretty ordinary, but there's more here than meets the eye, and we'll get to that; but first, a few of me old mates are in town for the holidays. They put together a little number for the show and, well, you know how it is with old pals: When the barnacles of indifference collect upon the rudder of destiny, there's nothing like the skilled hand of an old friend to apply the scraper of objectivity and the sandpaper of perspicuity to the peeling paint of . . . the peeling paint of, um . . . the paint of what . . .

Little Stanley

Indigestion, Uncle Myron.

Myron

Hmmm . . . the peeling paint of *indigestion*. . . no Little Stanley, that doesn't really make much sense . . .

Little Stanley

No, Uncle Myron, I mean I have a stomach ache. I think I ate too many chocolate elves.

Myron

I warned you about those elves, Little Stanley. Come on, I think I have something in the back for your tummy. (*to the sailors*) You're up, boys!

They exit, Stanley holding his gut, and the Sailors enter, in step, and sing "Sailors' Christmas Chantey."

Sailor One

He sailed into our world one night
In a manger in Bethlehem;
He knew our ship had foundered

On the perilous reefs of sin.
Some people don't believe us
When we say that he's our Lord;
But the drowning folk he's rescued
All praise God that he's aboard!

Chorus

Blow high, blow low,
Where e're the Spirit roars,
With Christ our skipper at the wheel,
We're bound for heaven's shores.

Sailor Two

To see him by the manger there
It was perfectly clear to a sailor's eye
That he'd be no land-lubber;
His best mates would be fishermen,
And fishers of men, too;
With a single word he could quiet a storm
And calm the briny blue!

Chorus

Sailor Three

As a carpenter he'd build a boat
No reef nor shoal could sink;
His masts were straight, his rudders true,
His hull square in the drink;
As a man of the sea he sailed a course
Just like his pappy planned;
And when they raised him on his mast,
He sailed to heaven's land.

Chorus

All Sailors

So Uncle Myron here's to you,
For we know you're his man.
In your day you sailed as true
As any mortal can;
You gave your life in service to
That babe in Bethlehem;
Now sailors all around the world,
Think of you as a friend.

Chorus